

Today's News - Tuesday, June 8, 2010

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're heading to Miami for AIA convention tomorrow morning, so no newsletter Wednesday or Thursday; we'll try posting again on Friday - but if that doesn't work out (busy schedule!), we'll definitely be back Monday, June 14.

- Weinstein gives (mostly) thumbs-up to new Ando tome that richly illustrates the "poet of light and concrete."
- There's a new metric in town: the Vitality Index, meant "to improve cities through a rethinking of creativity and its relationship to economic development and public policy."
- An extreme makeover in the works for Cairo's Downtown to make it greener and more pedestrian friendly to highlight its architectural identity.
- Architects lend their voices to what to do about the not yet completed Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) East-West Highway: what to do with what has already been built, and how to deal with remaining urban architecture problems.
- Perhaps both cities should take advantage of ASLA's new Sustainability Toolkit: Economic Models.
- U.S. firms making a mark in Brazil (some up's, some down's).
- Hawthorne cites sources who say Broad favors DS+R over OMA for new L.A. museum - but he could still change his mind.
- Open atrium design lands Adamson Associates/Rogers Stirk Harbour Toronto's St. Lawrence Market north building project.
- Russell minces no words about what NYU is doing to NYC's Greenwich Village, which "has struggled to survive the university's strikingly tin ear for history and architecture."
- It's been a long time coming, but plans for a number of projects for Brooklyn Arts District finally move ahead.
- Campbell says the innovative interior of a new concert hall in Rockport, MA, hits all the right notes (too bad the street façade "is forgettable to say the least" - but it's not the architects' fault).
- Hume tries to find a few good things to say about Corbu's Berlin apartment building: "Its significance demands we pay attention, but can't lift it above the banality not just of its architecture but of the assumptions on which it was based."
- More on Moscow's Strelka Institute - and Rem wrapped in a fleece blanket "making him look like the superhero that the crowd already believed him to be."
- ASLA puts itself forward to lend a hand in helping the Commission on the BP oil spill to develop a remediation and mitigation strategy for the ongoing catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico (our hearts break every time we turn on the news).
- "Now + When: Australian Urbanism" at the Venice Architecture Biennale will include some sci-fi inspiration using the same technology that create Hollywood blockbusters (without the Hollywood budgets).
- Glancey celebrates Ian Nairn, the "voice of outrage" and the "scourge of 'subtopia'."
- Pearman on Sudjic's Foster biography: the problem is that the subject is "both very private and a total control freak...a biographer's nightmare."
- A good reason to head to Boston next week: the 10-day Common Boston Festival will celebrate architecture and design (and everything is free!).
- We couldn't resist: RMJM's Abu Dhabi tower makes Guinness World Records list as World's Furthest Leaning Manmade Tower (lots of paperwork involved).

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Book Review: Shedding Light on Concrete: "Tadao Ando: Complete Works 1975-2010" by Philip Jodidio: Photographic presentation of a poet of light and concrete triumphs over lackluster commentary. By Norman Weinstein [images]- ArchNewsNow

Creativity and the City: The New Measure: ...Vitality Index...to improve cities through a rethinking of creativity and its relationship to economic development and public policy...can insert the value of culture - as opposed to cultural institutions or creative industries alone - into the planning process. This approach does not limit possibilities for innovation, but helps create them by engaging residents with the destiny of their city. By Linda Lees/Creative Cities International- UNESCO Observatory

Downtown Cairo's Extreme Makeover: Once the capital's cultural and social center, Khedival Cairo is looking to regain its former glory: ...if the government's plans come to fruition, Downtown will become greener, less congested and more pedestrian friendly...the first step is to implement a ban on cars...develop the area into a vital tourist attraction, highlighting the architectural identity.- Egypt Today

Master design plan needed for East-West Highway: ...facilitating travel between HCMC and fringe cities...Since it was opened eight months ago, rampant development has occurred..."We are now discussing solutions to deal with what has already been built"...It waits to be seen how management agencies will solve the East-West Highway's remaining urban architecture problems... -- Nguyen Van Tat; Khuong Van Muoi/HCMC Architects Association; Ngo Viet Nam Son- VietNamNet Bridge

Sustainability Toolkit: Economic Models: ...assessment tools, checklists, modeling software, and case studies designed to aid policy makers and design professionals roll out sustainable projects at the regional, urban, and local levels. [links to toolkits]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Emerging Market: Brazil: The country will capture global attention when it hosts the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016. Not surprisingly, U.S. architects are also taking notice. But the Brazilian market is far from terra incognita...architects who work in Brazil help map out the landscape. -- Davis Brody Bond Aedas; Populous; Arquitectonica; Beame Architectural Partnership; VOA Associates/VOA/LB; HKS; Kahn do Brasil/Albert Kahn Associates- Architect Magazine

Eli Broad favors Diller Scofidio + Renfro to design art museum on Bunker Hill, sources say: But they warn that Broad could still change his mind...he won't make a decision on the location or an architect until later this month. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Rem Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)- Los Angeles Times

Open atrium design chosen for new St. Lawrence Market north building: ..."it lends itself to be a market that is a community centre, a

place where people come to meet ... And it will work functionally" -- Adamson Associates/Rogers Stirk Harbour [slide show]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

New York University Assails Greenwich Village: ...a decades-long onslaught of overbearing, banal new buildings and the imposition of fake history...the Village has struggled to survive the university's strikingly tin ear for history and architecture...Why does NYU squander its greatest fixed asset - its place in one of the most vibrant neighborhoods in the U.S.? By James S. Russell -- I.M. Pei (1966); SMMW; Toshiko Mori; Grimshaw; Machado & Silvetti- Bloomberg News

After Delays, An Arts District Grows in Brooklyn: Ambitions for a Brooklyn cultural district have faltered, and key parts of the plan have fallen by the wayside. But six projects remain and are set to open over the next two years. -- Enrique Norton/TEN Arquitectos; H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture; Ken Smith; Leeson Architecture- Gotham Gazette (NYC)

Rockport's musical heart beats anew: Innovative interior makes Shalin Liu Performance Center sing: ...street facade, by contrast, is forgettable to say the least. Avoiding the tiniest glimmer of innovation or daring seems to have been goal of the town of Rockport. It's an attitude so timid it's scary...it's the interior that matters. This one is a joy. By Robert Campbell -- Epstein Joslin Architects; Larry Kirkegaard- Boston Globe

Le Corbusier's Berlin apartment building was home to an idea: Unité d'Habitation envisioned a world in which human needs were handled with machine-like efficiency...Its significance demands we pay attention, but can't lift it above the banality not just of its architecture but of the assumptions on which it was based. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star

Russia's New Privatization: The country's universities are moribund and behind the times. Can Moscow's entrepreneurs and philanthropists build something better? Koolhaas...spoke about Strelka Institute's mission to educate and inspire a new way of thinking about architecture, design, media, and urban planning in Russia.- Foreign Policy magazine

Gulf of Mexico Ecosystem Restoration: ASLA recently sent a letter...applauding the efforts of Obama's Commission on the BP oil spill to develop a remediation and mitigation strategy...highlights the expertise of landscape architects in site remediation, and offers the expertise of the Society and its members in helping the Commission address the ecological and economic impact of this catastrophe.- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Australian architects imagine cities of the future: "Now + When: Australian Urbanism" will be the Australian Institute of Architects' major exhibition at this year's Venice Architecture Biennale...Using the same technology that helped create Avatar, Australian architects invent our possible future. -- John Wardle Architects; Arup; Justyna Karakiewicz/Tom Kvan/Steve Hatzellis [images, video]- NEWS.com.au (Australia)

Ian Nairn's voice of outrage: His attacks on the banality of Britain's postwar buildings made [him] an inspiration for a generation of architectural critics...truly detested the way we were selling (as we continue to) our landscape, our townscapes, for a mess of nothing worth looking at, much less living in or handing down to our children...Jonathan Glancey celebrates the scourge of 'subtopia'- Guardian (UK)

The Norman Foster biography that isn't: "Norman Foster: a life in architecture" by Deyan Sudjic: Being the most successful architect Britain...ought to make you a very interesting person...The trouble...is that he is both very private and a total control freak...a biographer's nightmare. By Hugh Pearman- HughPearman.com (UK)

Common Boston Festival: 10-day festival celebrating architecture and design throughout the city...more than 40 building tours, lectures, art exhibitions and walking tours - and every event is free and open to all; June 17-27 - Boston Foundation for Architecture/Boston Society of Architects/AIA

Abu Dhabi makes Pisa sit up straight: Guinness World Records officials name Capital Gate tower as World's Furthest Leaning Manmade Tower...puts a new slant on edgy architecture...nearly five times more inclined than the freestanding Leaning Tower of Pisa. -- RMJM [image]- The National (UAE)



Steven Holl Architects: Linked Hybrid, Beijing, China; photos by Iwan Baan

Some pages may expire after a few days.

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